

USGBC Takes Part in World Children’s Festival, Kids Turn Trash into a New City

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The National Mall was buzzing with the creativity of hundreds of kids from around the world last month, as USGBC took part in the 4th [World Children’s Festival](#) on June 17. As a part of the three-hour “Living City” workshop, kids were introduced to new ways of looking at old water bottles, coffee cups and to-go boxes – and with the help of USGBC volunteers put them to use designing a city of the future.

Hundreds of young people from all over the world took part in the World Children’s Festival, with many stopping by the USGBC workshop.

With the help of Tucson, Ariz. art teacher Linda Cato, visitors to our booth were given a choice of sustainable buildings to create, using only recyclable materials collected by USGBC staff. The “Living City” workshop was Linda’s brainchild, based on lessons she has taught with her students at [Imago Dei Middle School](#). In May 2009 Linda’s students won [CEFPI’s School of the Future Design Competition](#), for the design and model of their dream green school. Linda made the trip out to DC to get her “Living City” project off the ground, setting up shop at USGBC’s headquarters on the Thursday before the festival to sort through materials and round up volunteers.

Art teacher Linda Cato spent the day before the festival at USGBC, preparing materials for the Living City workshop.

On Friday morning Linda and I took all the materials down to the National Mall to set up our workshop for kids to stop by and create their green city - and create they did! From the time the booth was set up to the time it was the next group’s turn to have the space there was a constant flow of kids who wanted to unleash their inner architect and add their building to the rapidly developing city skyline. Among the buildings created were a water collection plant, a recycling center and a wind harvesting skyscraper (complete with a pinwheel turbine on top!).

At the end of the day, an entire 1,280 square-inch board was covered with sustainable green buildings made out of what was otherwise seen as waste. The model city is now on display in the café at USGBC headquarters, and is a testament to what can happen when you give a kid a water bottle, some cardboard, some shiny metal tape and a little education on building green.

The final product, a model of a cityscape, was made entirely out of recyclable materials, collected by USGBC staff.

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